Heavenly Geometry

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 19, 1866,

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"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God." Ephesians 3:16-19.

THIS Divine measurement is an art of the most desirable kind, as appears from its being the object of most earnest Apostolic prayers. Paul was not content to travail in birth for souls and to become their spiritual parent—but he afterwards exercised the functions of a nursing father, tenderly caring for the souls to whom he had been blessed—and desiring to see them growing up in the faith to the ripeness of spiritual maturity. He was parent, nurse, and tutor—in fact he became all things, as far as lay within his power—to his spiritual children.

Paul's wise tenderness leads us to an assured confidence that the blessing to pray for, which he suspended his writing of so important an Epistle, must have been of the very highest value. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." He felt that it was desirable to the very last degree that the saints should not only know themselves to be the objects of Divine favor, but should be well acquainted with its sublime qualities and perfections which he here compares to a fourfold measurement.

In this measurement may you and I be skilled. If we know nothing of mathematics, may we be well-tutored scholars in this spiritual geometry and be able to comprehend the breadths and lengths of Jesus' precious love. It may be well at the outset to call your attention to the previous education which the Apostle desires for the saints as a preliminary to their measurement of Divine love. Then the measurement itself which he desires them to practice. And lastly, the practical results which would be sure to follow from their being able to comprehend the love of Christ Jesus our Lord.

I. Like a wise and enlightened teacher, Paul desires for the saints that they should receive THAT PREVIOUS EDUCATION WHICH IS NECESSARY BEFORE THEY WILL BE ABLE TO ENTER UPON SUCH A SCIENCE AS THE MEASUREMENT OF CHRIST'S LOVE. When lads go to school they are not at first put to study algebra, nor are they sent out to make a trigonometrical survey of a county. The schoolmaster knows that they must have a rudimentary knowledge of arithmetic, or else to teach them algebra would be a waste of time, and that they must have some acquaintance with common geometry, or it would be absurd to instruct them in surveying.

He therefore begins with the elementary information, and when they have learned simpler matters they are ready for the more difficult studies. They climb the steps of the door of science and then they are introduced to her temple. The Apostle Paul does not propose that the new convert should at once be able to measure the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ! He knows that this is not within the range of his infant mind, for the new-born spirit has a time of growth to go through before it can enter into the deep things of God. We must learn our alphabet at the dame's school of repentance and faith, and study the syntax of Christian holiness at the grammar school of experience before we can enter the university of full assurance and obtain a fellowship among those who comprehend the science of Christ Crucified in its highest degree.

It is not for the mere babe to compute distances or to fathom depths—this is work for men! The child will think as a child and understand as a child until instruction and years have developed his powers and fitted him for more sublime and manly thought. If you will kindly refer to the text you will see what this previous education is which the Apostle desired for the saints. It is very fully described in three parts. First, He desired that their spiritual faculties might be strengthened, for he prays that they might be "strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man." He does not so much intend that they may be strengthened in their mental faculties as in their spiritual capacities, to which he refers by the term, "inner man."

The schoolmaster knows that the boy's mind must be strengthened, that his understanding must be exercised, his discernment must be developed, and his memory must be rendered capacious before he may enter upon superior studies. And the Apostle knows that our spiritual faculties must undergo the same kind of development. Our faith, for instance, must be unwavering. Our love must become fervent. Our hope must be bright. Our joy must be increased, and then, but not till then, we shall be able to comprehend the length and breadth of Divine love. We are to be strengthened in the inner man by the Spirit of God—and who can strengthen as He strengthens? When the Divine Omnipotence pours its renewing energy into our poor fainting weakness, then we grow strong, indeed!

When the Divine Intelligence enlightens our pitiful ignorance, then we grow truly wise. When the Divine Infinity enlarges and expands our narrow capacities to receive the Truth of God, then are we blessedly elevated to otherwise unattainable points of blissful knowledge. Oh the blessedness of being strengthened of the Holy Spirit! How spiritually strong do we become when He infuses His might into us! But the Spirit of God works by means, and therefore we may expect to have our spiritual faculties strengthened by the study of the Word, by communion with Christ, by listening to the earnest exhortations of our Brethren, by experience, by prayer, and by all other hallowed exertions which Divine Grace has ordained to be the channels of communication between the heirs of the kingdom and the Comforter who abides with them forever.

Our strength to learn with must come from God the Holy Spirit. I suppose the expression, "strengthened with might," is meant to refer to an eminent measure of strength. The Christian man will get to Heaven should he have only strength as a grain of mustard seed. Through many difficulties the work of faith, though almost water-logged, will be tugged into the harbor, for Christ is on board and secures her safety! But it is not desirable that we should thus struggle into eternal life. It is far more to be hoped that our young faculties may come to healthy and vigorous manhood so that, to return to our former metaphor, our vessel—staunch and in good trim, with her sails well filled, and her flags flying right gallantly, having overcome every storm—may have an abundant entrance into the desired haven.

Brethren, I trust you are not among those who think it quite enough to be barely alive unto God. I trust that you wish to be not only babes in the family, but young men and fathers in the household, and that you aspire to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit with might that you may become powerful men—men able to enter into the soul and marrow of Divine things, and to discern between things that differ. I would have you not mere milk-fed infants, but men able to crack the nuts of the Gospel and to digest the strong meat, because by reason of years you have had all your senses exercised.

Why should we forever be obliged to lay again the foundations? Why not press onward and upward in heavenly attainments as men do in human learning? Why must our heads always wear the dunce's cap and our backs smart with the fool's rod? The Holy Spirit works in us to this very end that we may be no more mere children, but well-taught men of God! Oh grieve Him not, but be willing to be taught! This was the object of the Apostle's prayers and of our loving anxieties. Remember, Beloved, that none of you will be able to comprehend the measurement of the love of Christ unless first of all the Holy Spirit, our Instructor, shall have baptized your spiritual powers with His sacred influences. Then you will be strengthened with might in that refined and newly created part of your being which is called the inner man, because it is your truest, most precious, most secret, most vital, most essential self.

A second part of this preliminary education is mentioned by our Apostle in the next sentence—"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." He desires that the Object of study may be evermore before them. A good tutor not only wishes his scholar may have a disciplined mind able to grapple with the subject, but he endeavors to keep the subject always before him. In order to attain to any proficiency in a science, the mind must be abstracted from all other thoughts and continually exercised with the chosen theme. You will never find a man preeminent in astronomy unless astronomy has become the lord of his mind and holds a sway over his mind even in his dreams. The anatomist must be bound to nerves, and bones, and blood vessels—as the galley slave is bound to the oar—or he will never master his subject.

The botanist must be enamored of every flower, and wedded to every plant, or the fields will utterly baffle him. "Through desire, a man having separated himself, seeks and inter-

meddles with all wisdom." Solomon knew what he wrote when he said, "separated himself," for without separation or abstraction there can be no progress. Now, the Apostle desires that we who are Believers, our faculties being strengthened, may have the Person of Jesus constantly before us to inflame our love, and so increase our knowledge. See how near he would have Jesus be! "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." You cannot get a subject closer to you than to have it on the inner side of the eyes—that is to say, in the heart itself.

The astronomer cannot always see the stars because they are far away, and outside of him. But our Star shines in the Heaven of our hearts ever more. The botanist must find his flowers in their seasons, but our Plant of renown blooms in our souls all the year round! We carry the instruments of our saintly art, and the Object of our devout contemplation within ourselves! As a scholar carries in his pocket a small edition of his favorite classic, so do we carry Christ in our hearts. What if I say we bear about with us a heart edition of the Libra Crucis, the Book of the Cross? Renewed hearts need no other library than themselves, for Jesus, in our inmost spirits, is library enough! If we knew more fully by experience the meaning of, "Christ in you the hope of glory," our Heaven-taught affections, which are the best part of our inner man, might be continually exercised upon the Person, the work, and the love of our dear Redeemer. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts."

Brothers and Sisters, it will be to small profit that we shall talk to you about the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ unless there is in your soul a devout longing ambition to set the Lord Jesus always before you, as the frequent, if not the constant Subject of your meditation! No progress to any extent is to be made in the school of the Cross unless you separate yourself and give yourself wholly to this. It must be the one great business of your life, to know Him and the power of His Resurrection. I would to God that we were all entered as diligent scholars in Jesus' college—students of Corpus Christi, or the Body of Christ—resolved to attain unto a good degree in the learning of the Cross, a learning which angels desire to understand!

But to do this the heart must be full of Jesus, welling up with His love, flaming with it, overrunning with it! And therefore the Apostle prays, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts." Observe the words, "that He may dwell"—not that He may call upon you sometimes, as a casual visitor enters into a house and tarries for a night—but that He may dwell. That Christ may take up His abode in your hearts. That the Lord Jesus may become the Lord and tenant of your inmost being, never more to go out, but to dwell there, world without end. Observe, too, the words that He may dwell in your hearts—that best room of the house of manhood—not in your thoughts alone, but in your affections! Not merely have Him in your minds, but have Him in your loves.

Paul wants you to have a love to Christ of a most abiding character. Not a love that flames up under an earnest sermon and then dies out into the darkness of a few embers, but

a constant flame—the abiding of Jesus' love in your hearts, both day and night—like the flame upon the altar which never went out. This cannot be accomplished except by faith. Faith must be strong, or love will not be fervent. The root of the flower must be healthy or we cannot expect the bloom to be sweet. Faith is the lily's root, and love is the lily's bloom. Now Jesus cannot be in your heart's love except you have a firm hold of Him by your heart's faith. Therefore Paul prays that you may always trust Christ, that you may always love Him. Thus, Brethren, the Lord Jesus, being constantly brought under your heart's attention, you are likely to be able to comprehend the measurement of His love which would otherwise be impossible for you to do.

The Apostle prays further that they may have practical exercise in the art of holy love—"that you, being rooted and grounded in love." Every experienced tutor knows that it is greatly helpful to the student to exercise him in his chosen pursuit upon some lower and inferior branch of it, so as to lead him gradually to the higher points of it. If, for instance, he means him to understand the surveying of estates, he bids him measure a field containing an acre or two. If he means him to map out a country, he sets him first to make a plan of a neighboring field or a farm.

The Apostle acts upon the same method. "That you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend the breadth and length of the love of Christ." Having the love of Jesus in you—possessed with love to Christ—you will be practiced in the exercise of love and so will understand the love which filled the Savior. You will learn to do business upon the greater waters of the Redeemer's infinite love to His people as you sail upon the stream of your love to Him. Two expressions are used—"rooted," like a living tree which lays hold upon the soil twists itself round the rocks, and cannot be upturned. "Grounded," like a building which has been settled, as a whole, and will never show any cracks or flaws in the future through failures in the foundation.

The Apostle wishes us to be rooted and grounded in love, a vital union being established between our souls and Jesus, so that we love Him because He first loved us. And also a fiducial union, or a union of trust by which we rest upon Jesus as the stones of a wall are settled upon the foundation. He would have us, by love and by faith, to be knit to Christ, and to be firm, and fast, and fixed, and immovable in our loving attachment to Him. My dear Brothers and Sisters, you cannot know Christ's love to you, to any great extent, except you thus love Him. You must love, or you cannot comprehend love. A man who has never felt benevolence towards his fellow creatures—and there are some such monsters—sneers and laughs at those who can give their money to the poor or to the sick. He thinks such persons fools at least, if not absolutely mad.

"Ah," said one, "I know how to make money," and then he added significantly, clenching his fist, "and I know what some people do not know—I know how to take care of it, too." There are some benevolent people who do not know how to take care of it in that sense, but

they know how to do good with it! And such people will never be comprehended by the mean money-grubbing wretch who pollutes the earth he lives upon. As though he were a very Solomon, and benevolent men were idiots, he mutters conceitedly, "Well, I cannot understand it. It is stupidity to give away your hard-earned money." Of course it is to him! He cannot comprehend it, and so the love of Jesus Christ cannot be comprehended by a man who does not love.

If you have no love to souls, you will not understand why Jesus wept over Jerusalem. It will puzzle you mightily! You will look to Matthew Henry, and Scott, and Gill, and be more puzzled still. But if you love the souls of men you will find no difficulty in the passage at all, for you will weep over sinners, too. If you do not love the saints, you will wonder how Jesus can love them. But when you have once felt an unselfish Christ-like love to your fellow men, the riddle will be answered. He who circumnavigated the world began by sailing upon brooks and mill ponds. And he who would measure the breadths and lengths of Jesus' love must feel his own soul filled with affection for his Lord.

Paul would have us, then, with developed faculties—with the Subject in our hearts, and with an exercise of love on our part—prepared to enter upon the science. My Brethren, when I consider what a science it is—the science of the love of Christ—the most masterly of all knowledge, too deep for the archangel's intellect, the wonder of all the hosts of Heaven! When I consider that the greatest human minds have confessed themselves to be altogether lost in the contemplation, and have had to say, "Oh the depths! Oh the depths!" I do not wonder at all that the Apostle, instead of praying for us that we might immediately enter upon the study of it, first prays that we may be gratified to learn it. As some sciences, if taught to an illiterate man would be only taught in their letter, and could not be learned in their spirit for want of capacity to receive them, so the love of Jesus Christ in its length, and breadth, and depth, and height—if it could be taught in the letter of it to an untrained Believer—would be, in a great measure, lost upon him.

He would not be deriving true knowledge from it. He would observe the letter, but the inward spirit he would not be able to understand. Beloved, if you are to win the precious attainment of the knowledge of Christ's love in its depth and breadth, you must pray that God would strengthen your spiritual powers. You must plead that Jesus may abide in your souls and that your love to Him may become vigorous and all-absorbing! For only then can you drink deeply into the unutterable and infinite love of Jesus!

II. We now come to consider more closely the SCIENCE OF HEAVENLY MEASUREMENT ITSELF. According to the text we have a solid body to deal with, for we are to measure its breadth and length, and depth, and height. This cubical measurement—for it lies foursquare, like the new Jerusalem—proves the reality of the body to be measured.

Alas, to a great many religious people the love of Jesus is not a solid substantial thing at all—it is a beautiful fiction, a sentimental belief, a formal theory—but to Paul it was a

real, substantial, measurable fact. He had considered it this way, and that way, and the other way. And it was evidently real to him, whatever it might be to others. No one knows the love of Christ at all if he does not know it to be real, and no one has felt it in his soul at all unless it becomes so real as to constrain him and move him into actual activity.

We have a word which we sometimes use in a sense which I believe is not correct according to the dictionary. I mean the word "realize." That word has been forced into the language of Christian experience, and can never be forced out again. We must realize, or make real to our hearts the love of Christ. That is just what I think the Apostle did—he made real to himself the love of his Master and Lord. It was not to him a surface theory, which might have breadth, but could not have depth—or a mere narrow statement with length, but no breadth! It was a thing as firm and solid as anything in the world.

It is true the love of Jesus is not material and earthly so as to be seen and handled, but it is even more substantial than if it were a thing to be seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, and the things which are not seen are eternal. To the carnal man the visible is real, and the invisible a mere dream. But to the spiritual man things are reversed—the visible is the shadow and the invisible the substance! May you be such men, dear Friends, all of you! The Apostle desires that when the love of Christ becomes to us a solid reality we may have close communion with it. You may measure the breadth and length of a thing at a great distance, but you cannot very well measure its depth without drawing near to it.

What a holy familiarity with Jesus do the words imply when we come to measurements of all kinds! What condescension is this which allows the sacred heart to be fathomed like a sea, and to be measured as a field! Shall the Infinite thus bow itself to man? Shall man refuse to commune with such condescending love? Should it not be our deep desire to obtain and to retain the most intimate acquaintance with the thrice-blessed love of Jesus, so as not only to measure it in one form, but in all forms? That in every way in which the love of Christ may be regarded, from above or from below, we may be well acquainted with it.

We should know the inmost secrets of the Redeemer's love! Its doings and sacrifices which are the apparent part of it—its breadth, its counsels and its plans. Its depth—the secret part of it. Its length—its endurance and patience. Its height—its triumphs and glories. We would know all that is knowable, for when we know all that has been learned by mortals, there is still something that is beyond our view, and hence the Apostle adds, "to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge."

Let me come to the very words of our text, and point out to you their order. The first object of the Christian's knowledge should be the breadth of the Savior's love. I know a certain school of Christians who have need to study this point, for they have a very narrow idea of the Lord's loving kindness. They cannot be brought by any means to conceive of it as being broad—to them it is no wider than a razor's edge. They conceive of Divine love as a very narrow stream. They have never seen it to be a mighty, flowing, abounding, and re-

joicing river such as it really is. The breadth of Christ's love, dear Friends, we are told in Scripture, is such that it extends to all ranks and races of mankind—not to the Jew only, but also to the Gentile.

The love of Jesus Christ does not surround our favored island alone, but like the ocean, it washes every shore. The love of Jesus Christ has been extended to kings upon their thrones, but with equal and more frequent bounty to the slaves in their dungeons. In some respects the love of Jesus comes to every man, for there is not a man or woman born who does not owe something to the benevolence of God through the love of Jesus. The respite which keeps the sinner out of Hell is no doubt the result of that love which said, "Spare it yet a little longer, till I dig about it and fertilize it, and if it brings forth fruit, well."

Beloved, the benevolent love of Jesus is more extended than the lines of His electing love, for we hear Him saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which kills the Prophets, and stones them that are sent unto you; how often would I have gathered your children together as a hen does gather her brood under her wings, and you would not." That is not the love which beams resplendently upon His chosen, but it is true love for all that—pitying and benevolent love which revealed itself in honest tears of grief. I would not have you omit this view of the subject when you are measuring its breadth, although we still feel that in its utmost depth and fullness that love flows only to His people.

Beloved, consider the breadth of special love. We are very apt to conceive the number of God's elect to be but few. Who told us that? When the Savior was asked, "Lord, are there few that shall be saved?" He never answered that question, but He said, "Strive to enter into the strait gate," as though He had said, "Whether there are many or not, you strive to the utmost to enter in." I hope that the multitude of the chosen will far exceed the number of the lost. It has always seemed to me that if in all things Christ will have the pre-eminence, He will not suffer the powers of darkness to drag away the major part of the human race.

On the contrary, a multitude that no man can number—so many as the stars in Heaven for multitude, and like the sands upon the seashore are innumerable—shall be the fruit of His suffering which shall make Him to see of the travail of His soul and to be satisfied. It is well to have as broad ideas of the love of Christ as Scripture will permit us, and there I trust we shall be content to stay. But, Brethren, we get the best idea of the breadth of Christ's love when we behold it flowing to our lost and guilty selves! I never thought it so broad a stream till I found that it reached to me, even to me! I feared that I was far away from its blessed margin, but the river swelled and overflowed its banks until at last it washed me, even me!

How broad it must have been to have reached to some here present who had wandered into the plains of sin, and had followed after their own wanton devices, and yet the breadth of the river embraced even them. You may measure the breadth of it by the sins which it covers. When a river is overflowing, you tell how broad it must be by the little hillocks and the treetops, which you can see in it. You may see how broad is the love of Christ, that it

reaches to such offenses as these—it reaches to theft, to drunkenness, to blasphemy, to fornication, to adultery, to murder. The Savior's measurement of it is this, "All manner of sin and of blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men."

There is a boundry. It stops at one sin which is unto death, but of that we know nothing and I trust we never may! With that one exception, broad as sin is, so broad is this mighty love of Christ which covers it all. Do you not think, however, that we, most of us, fail to see the breadth of Christ's love in matters of Providence? You know what is meant by the breadth of a man's mind, the breadth of his thoughts when he can consider a great many subjects at once—when he has the ability to accomplish many designs and many purposes with one stroke. Now, the breadth of the Savior's love is just this—there is no part of His people's interests which He does not consider. And there is nothing which concerns their welfare which is not important to Him.

Not merely does He think of you, Believer, as an immortal being, but as a mortal being, too. Do not deny it or doubt it—the very hairs of your head are all numbered! There is nothing that concerns His elect that is unimportant to our Lord. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way." It were a sad thing for us if this river of love did not cover all our concerns, for what mischief might be worked for us in that part of our business which did not come under our gracious Lord's inspection. Oh, Believer, rest assured that the heart of Jesus concerns itself about your meaner affairs! Your buying and selling He cares for. Your counter and counting-house, your ships and your carts and your horses, and your barley, and your wheat, and your hay, and your straw—your children, your little ones, and everything which concerns you concerns Him, also.

The breadth of His tender love is such that you may go to Him in all matters—for in all your afflictions He is afflicted—and like as a father pities his children, so does He pity you. This invites us to look at the breadth of the Savior's love under a still greater aspect. All the concerns of all His saints that have ever lived or ever shall live, are all borne upon the broad bosom of the Son of God! Oh what a heart His is, that does not merely comprehend the persons of His people, but comprehends the diverge and innumerable concerns of all those persons! Alexander, it is said, knew the names of his soldiers, but Alexander could not think of every soldier in every tent, and of all the business of every soldier. But this the love of Christ does—He thinks of all the cares and all the troubles and all the joys present and to come of every blood-bought one.

Now see, dear Friend, if you can measure the breadth of the love of Christ! You have a task before you which you will not yet accomplish, and if you could, there would still remain another breadth, namely, that breadth measured by the gifts which He brings. Think of what He has brought you! He has brought you justification! Yes, adoption, sanctification, eternal life! The riches of His goodness are unsearchable. You shall never be able to tell them out or even conceive them. Oh the breadth of the love of Christ! And yet you see this is merely

a beginning because the breadth and measurement is but surface work. This is for you youngsters to think about, but yet I wish some of the elder Christians would, too.

Some of them seem to be so taken up with the height and length that they deny the breadth, and you would think from hearing them preach that Christ came into the world to save half-a-dozen, and that they were five of them—at least that nobody else could go to Heaven except such as they were who swore by their Shibboleth and agreed in every jot and tittle with their creed. Away with their narrowness! There will be more in Heaven than we expect to see there by a long way—and there will be some there with whom we had very little comfortable fellowship on earth—who had fellowship with Christ, and who are therefore taken to dwell with Him forever.

The next object of study is the length of Christ's love. It has been well observed that if Christ had thought upon His people for ten minutes it would have been a wonderful condescension. In fact it would have been a thing to sing of in Heaven that Christ Jesus did once think upon us, because we are not worthy of a minute of God's thoughts. Now just try, if you can, to grasp the thought. He has thought upon His people as long as He has existed! Is it not eternal love, and what is longer than that? "I have loved you with an everlasting love." As long, then, with Deity itself is the love of Deity towards its chosen ones!

God did love us in His Son long before the world began. If an angel were to start from today with the design of finding out when God's love began, he would doubtless fly on till he lingered at the Cross. "Here," he would say, "here is the fountain, here is the source of it all." But he would be reminded that, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." Then there was a love before the giving of His Son. He would fly onward till he paused at Isaiah's day and heard of God's love in the prophecy that the Son of man should bear the iniquity of His people. He would say, "Surely it begins here!" But saints would remind him of yet older words of comfort, and he would fly on till he stopped outside of the garden of Eden and heard the Lord say, "The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

"Surely," he would say, "it began here." But divinely instructed he would go back yet further, even to the eternal councils where first of all salvation was planned and contrived in the cabinets of Wisdom before the world was. He would have to go back, back, back, till creation had vanished—till there remained not a shred of existence except the absolute self-existent Deity—and then in the Eternal Mind he would see thoughts of love toward a people to be formed for Himself. This knowledge of the length of love does not always come to Christians early in their history. Some of my dear Brethren know the breadth of Christ's love right well, but they seem as if they never would learn its length.

Some of our Arminian friends know a great deal about the breadth of it, and can preach very sweetly upon it, too. And I thank God they can, for they are the means of bringing in many converts who might not be brought in if it were not for their broad preaching. Yes, dear Brothers and Sisters, it may be as broad as you like, but it must be long, too. You must

not preach a love that begins when you begin, but a love which is before you—a causeless love which is the cause and not the effect of your love—a love which knows no beginning, but is ancient as the throne of Deity.

This love is not only without beginning but it is without pause. There is never a moment when Jesus ceases to love His people. The love of Jesus knows nothing of suspended animation. There are some rivers in Australia which lose themselves, and for miles along their bed you find nothing but dry stones at certain seasons of the year. It is never so with the love of Christ—it is long, and without a break from beginning to end—it is a chain without a single broken or feeble link. The love of Jesus possesses an eternal existence in which there is not a single intermission, nor even a sign of failure or hint of an end. Here let us rejoice without trembling. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end."

We lean our heads upon this pillow and we sleep right sweetly there—"He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." "He said, I am God, I change not, therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever." "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." There are no ifs and buts in this circle of Divine Grace! All is as certain as the Throne of God. Our conquering Captain shall bring many sons to Glory, and His shall be the praise.

Dear Friends, we studiously consider the length of this love of Christ, but I am persuaded, study it as we may, we shall never completely grasp it. It is so long that your old age cannot wear it out. So long that your continual tribulations cannot exhaust it. Your successive temptations shall not drain it dry—like eternity itself it knows no bounds.

My time has fled and I am only in the middle of my subject! Therefore the rest of the discourse must be in brief hints and hurried sentences. The depth of the love of Jesus! Consider it as stooping to look upon such an insignificant creature as man! View the depth of that love in receiving such sinful creatures into His embrace! What a depth is seen when the Lord Jesus Christ selects some guilty wretch who has openly broken the laws of his country and subjected himself to punishment from his fellowmen, and yet the Lord Jesus freely pardons him when he repents of sin, and receives Him into his heart's love!

The depth of this river of love is best seen, however, in the fact that Jesus became a Man. Deity became Incarnate! The Lord of angels slept upon a woman's breast! Nor is this all. Being a Man, He bears our sorrows, goes through the world weary, and poor, and patient. A Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Nor is this all—He bears our sins. The iniquities of His people, like a huge load, are laid upon His shoulders, and He stands as their

Substitute. Even yet it is not enough, for He bears our punishment, and on the bloody tree He bows His head, and is obedient even unto death. Hell's waves rolled over Him. The eternal wrath of God spent itself upon His blessed head! He was made lower than the angels, but He stooped lower still, till He called himself a worm and no man!

Oh the depth of the agony of Jesus smarting for sin! O Sinner! You cannot have gone too deep for Christ's love to reach you. O Backslider! You cannot have sinned too foully for forgiveness! You who have gone beyond conception in sin—you who have practiced the foulest and most devilish of sins—the depth of Christ's love is still deeper, and He is able to save even to the uttermost!

Think next of the height of the Master's love. You see it is put last, as the highest point of learning. There are some who have advanced as far as to understand somewhat of the depths who do not know the full dignity and glory of an heir of Heaven, and have felt but little of the power of His ascension. Why, the love of Jesus, even in this present life, is a height unspeakable, for has it not lifted us up to become sons of God? "And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." It has given us an earnest of the inheritance! It has made us anticipate the hour when we shall dwell with the angels of light! It tells us that our conversation is in Heaven, and that our life is hid with Christ in God!

Yet, Brethren, the height of this love will be best seen in a future state. You shall be borne up to dwell with Christ in the clouds when the world is in a blaze, and when the judgment is passed you shall be carried by angels' wings up to the seventh Heaven where God dwells! Oh the breadth, the length, the depth, the height! To sum up what we have said in four words—for breadth the love of Jesus is immensity, for length it is eternity, for depth it is immeasurability—and for height it is infinity. O Christian, may the Holy Spirit instruct you in these great things!

III. Lastly, two or three words. If it shall be our privilege to study this science and to master it, it will still be over and above us, for it passes all knowledge. But there will flow the following PRACTICAL RESULTS. We shall be filled with all the fullness of God. Brethren, do try and get hold of this marvelous expression when you are alone in meditation. Set it before you as a great mystery to be dived into. "Filled with all the fullness of God." What can it mean?

Is it to have God within you? God dwelling in your inmost spirit? It is this, but more! "Filled with God"—to hold as much of God as your nature can hold—what a thought! "Filled with God," even this is not all. "Filled with the fullness of God." The fullness of His love and Grace, and power, and holiness can come to dwell in you! But this, even, is not all that the verse speaks of! It is written, "filled with all the fullness of God." What a transcendent expression! Here we have not only an indwelling God, but that God in the utmost fullness of His Godhead filling and overflowing the whole soul with His fullness!

I cannot help borrowing an illustration from a friend who took up a bottle by the sea-shore, filled it full of seawater, corked it down, and then threw it into the sea. "Now," he said, "there it is, there is the sea in the bottle, and there is the bottle in the sea." It is full to fullness, and then, in a still greater fullness. There is my soul with God in it, and my soul in God! The fullness of God in me as much as I can hold, and then myself in the fullness of God. The illustration gives one as much of the text as one knows how to convey—ourselves swallowed up in the all-absorbing abyss of the love of God— and that same love of God flowing into all the parts and powers of our soul till we are as full of God as man can hold! Then shall we show that love in our lives, in our prayers, in our preaching, in everything that we do. We shall manifest not only that we have been with Jesus, but that we have Jesus dwelling in us, filling us right full with His loving, sanctifying, elevating Presence.

Beloved, if we shall reach the point indicated in the text, we shall then begin to imitate the love of God in its four aspects. I am sure if we shall ever learn the breadth of Christ's love our love will grow broad—we shall no longer confine our love to our own church—but shall care for all the churches of God. We shall feel an affection not only for Christians of our own name, but to Christians of all names. Then our love will gain length also. We shall love Christ so that we cannot leave off loving Him. We shall persevere in love, we shall abide in His love as He abides in it. We shall constantly have the flame of our love going up to Heaven.

And then our love will acquire depth. We shall be humbled on account of our own sinfulness. We shall sink lower and lower in our own esteem, and our love will become deeper and more grounded as it descends more fully into the core of our nature. And then love will climb the heights. We shall forget the world and the cares of it. We shall become

Christians who lie no longer among the pots, but who have received the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold. We shall attain to such a height in our love, that we shall scale the mountaintops of the promises, and with our foreheads bathed in the sunlight shall look down upon the world that still lies in darkness, and rejoice that we are made heirs of light!

Our love mounting to Heaven shall there be in its height as we appear before the Great White Throne and cast our crowns with many a song before Him who loved us with a breadth, and length, and depth, and height of love that even in Heaven shall surpass all measurement. God bless you, dear Friends, with this love, for Christ's sake. Amen.